

Conversations

for clarinet, viola and cello

Robert Davidson

Program Note

Conversations was composed for Perihelion shortly after returning from seven months of travel, focusing on musical study in South India and spending time in Europe and the USA. Perhaps as a result of the stimulus of this period, I found myself approaching the composition with a sense of openness, changing from my usual concern for the unity which results from reduced material. While the use of material is reduced, it stems from a wide range of sources, playfully combined. Hymns from my Methodist upbringing, Bach counterpoint, Sibelius harmony, Beatle tunes, rhythms of Kerala and countless other musics went into forming, in varying degrees, my musical intuition as it was in 1993. I attempted to allow this intuition full rein, believing that music is most successful when it accurately reflects its composer and his or her background.

Rational structures serve to organise the intuitive material of the three movements. The first and third movements are simple ground-bass canons. I am attracted to this form by its neat combination of repetition and variation, simultaneously defying and satisfying expectations, and by the way the instruments copy each other and get beyond their individual concerns. In the second movement a process of ever-diminishing time intervals articulates a handful of stretched-out chords, which accompany free pattern-melodies, swapped between the instruments in conversational fashion. Surrounding the first and second movements, and in the postlude, is music of quiet simplicity. Here there is less concern for rational structure than for communication of emotion, though not without a certain distance.

Conversations

for clarinet, viola and cello
for Perihelion

Robert Davidson
composed November 1993

I Allegro ♩ = 132

Clarinet in B \flat *bright, forward*

Viola

Cello

p

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

pp

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

mf *p*

A **Piu mosso ♩ = 144**

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

mf *esp.* *mp* *mf* *mp* *piu f*

32 B esp. *mf*

B \flat Cl. *mf*

Vla. *mp* *fp*

Vc. *mp* *f* *fp*

41 *mf* *mp*

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

49 *mp*

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

56 C *f* *mp*

B \flat Cl.

Vla. *f*

Vc. *fp* *mf* *mp*

64

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

D calmly legato, sost.

71 *f* *p subito* legato, sost.

71 *f* *p subito* legato, sost.

E a little bolder

82 *mf* *fp* *fp*

92

F accomp.

101 *p* *fp* bold but calm *mf* *fp* *mf* *mp*

109

109

116

B \flat Cl. *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f* off the string

123

B \flat Cl. *piu f*

Vla. *piu f*

Vc. *f*

131

B \flat Cl. *poco rit.*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *p*

H Tempo I ♩ = 132

139

B \flat Cl. *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

147

B \flat Cl. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

II Andante rubato ♩ = 72

7

154 *poco stringendo*

B♭ Cl. *p* *pp* *p*

Vla. *p* *mp* *p* *mp*

Vc. *p* *pp* *mp* *p*

163 *a tempo* *precise durations ** *poco rit.*

B♭ Cl. *mf* *p*

Vla. *mf* *p*

Vc. *mf* *p*

172 *short pause a tempo* *poco rit.* *a tempo*

B♭ Cl. *f dim.* *p* *pp*

Vla. *f dim.* *p* *pp* *(end of solo)*

Vc. *f dim.* *p* *mp* *Solo*

180 *esp.* *mf* *p*

B♭ Cl. *mf* *p*

Vla. *p* *mf* *p*

Vc. *mf* *p*

186 *poco meno mosso*

B♭ Cl. *ff* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *pp* *f* *p*

Vla. *ff* *mf* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *pp* *f* *p*

Vc. *ff* *mf* *dim.* *pp* *f* *p*

8

Piu mosso ♩ = 96

buoyant

194

B♭ Cl. *f p* *f p*

Vla. *f p* *f p*

Vc. *f p* *f p*

201

B♭ Cl. *pp* *f p*

Vla. *pp* *f p* *p sempre* *legato esp.*

Vc. *pp* *f p* *mp*

K Tempo I ♩ = 72

207

B♭ Cl. *mp* *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p* *p*

Vc. *f* *p* *p*

211

B♭ Cl. *mf* *f*

Vla. *mf* *f*

Vc. *mp* *fp* *mp*

215

B♭ Cl. *f p* *f p* *mf*

Vla. *f p* *mf*

Vc. *f p* *p sempre*

L

220 *elegantly*

B \flat Cl. *mf* *f* *p*

Vla. *pp* *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

224

B \flat Cl. *mp*

Vla. *f* *p* *mf*

Vc. *f* *p*

229 *mysteriously*

B \flat Cl. *mf* *ff* *p*

Vla. *mf* *ff* *p* *pp* *accomp.*

Vc. *ff* *p* *pp*

233

B \flat Cl. *fp* *mp*

Vla. *mp* *mf*

Vc. *mp* *mf*

239

B \flat Cl. *f* *p*

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

10

N

244

B \flat Cl. *f p mp*

Vla. *f p legato mf*

Vc. *f p pp accomp.*

250

B \flat Cl. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc.

O

255

B \flat Cl. *pp f p mp*

Vla. *pp f p pp accomp.*

Vc. *f p*

261

B \flat Cl. *p mp*

Vla.

Vc. *p mp*

267

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

Piu mosso $\text{♩} = 96^{11}$

273

B \flat Cl. *f p f p*

Vla. *f p p*

Vc. *p f p*

280

B \flat Cl. *pp*

Vla. *mp* Solo esp.

Vc. *pp*

287

B \flat Cl. *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

296

B \flat Cl. *f* *dim. poco a poco* *poco rit.*

Vla. *f* *dim. poco a poco*

Vc. *f* *dim. poco a poco*

303

B \flat Cl. *pp* *rit.*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

R **Piu mosso** $\text{♩} = 96$

III Energetic ♩ = 152

310

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

marcato

f

f

317

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

marcato

f

sfz *f*

S

323

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

sfz *f*

sfz *f*

sfz *f*

329

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

334

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

ben marcato

ben marcato

338 T

B \flat Cl. *spicc., lightly*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *Solo esp., dolce, legato*
p

344 *sotto voce*

B \flat Cl. *pp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mf*

351

B \flat Cl. *pp*

Vla. *pp*

Vc. *p* *sfz*

358 U

B \flat Cl. *f* *fp fp*

Vla. *f* *fp fp*

Vc. *f*

363

B \flat Cl. *fp < sfz* *ff fp fp fp*

Vla. *fp < sfz* *ff fp fp fp*

Vc. *tenuto* *ff*

14

369 *tenuto* *p* *pp* *pp* *legato, sost.* *very calm, but in strict tempo*

B \flat Cl. *legato, sost.*

Vla. *pp* *legato, sost.*

Vc. *pp*

377 *p* *p legato, sost.*

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

386 *W* *buoyant, joyful* *mf* *accomp. pizz.* *p*

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

393 *tr* *accomp.* *pp* *arco* *buoyant, joyful* *mf*

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

399

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

405 X

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

tr *p* *fff* *savagely* *fff* *ritmico, marcato, energico* *ff*

411 Y

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

ritmico, marcato, energico *ff*

417

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

423 Z

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

sotto voce *pp* *off the string* *pp* *mp* *Solo esp., dolce, legato* *p*

431

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

pp *mp* *pp* *pp* *mf* *p*

AA

confidently joyful

438

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

fff subito

f

445

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

451

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

BB

ben marcato

457

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

ben marcato

462

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

467 CC

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

474 DD

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

484 IV Andante $\text{♩} = 104$

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

493 EE

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

501 FF

B \flat Cl.

Vla.

Vc.

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Dynamic markings: *p*, *pp*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *ppp*, *arco*, *pizz.*, *semplce con sord.*, *0*.

Rehearsal marks: CC, DD, EE, FF.

Section: IV Andante $\text{♩} = 104$.

poco allarg. a tempo

510

B \flat Cl. *mf* *f*

Vla. *mf* *f*

Vc. *mf* *f*

518

B \flat Cl. *ff* *p*

Vla. *ff* *p* sul. II

Vc. *ff* *p*

poco allarg. intense poco string. rall.

523

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

GG lightly 6

526

Vla.

Vc.

529

B \flat Cl.

Vla. *f* *p*

Vc. *f* *p*

532 HH poco allarg. a tempo poco allarg. JJ **Piu mosso** $\text{♩} = 76$ 19
purely

B \flat Cl. *mf* *ff* *pp* subito purely

Vla. esp. *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *ff* *pp* subito purely

Vc. esp. *mf* *f* *mp* *mf* *ff* *pp* subito purely

543 dark, sombre

B \flat Cl. *p* *pp*

Vla. *mp* *p* *pp*

Vc. *mp* *p* *pp*

554 KK brightening (very short break)

B \flat Cl. *mp* *mf* *f* *pp* subito

Vla. brightening *mf* *f* *pp* subito

Vc. brightening *mp* *mf* *f* *pp* subito

563 LL blend tone with string harmonics rall.

B \flat Cl. *pp* sempre

Vla. *pp* sempre

Vc. *pp* sempre